I hope we will have meetings again soon but I do not feel able to do much I think it hurts me worse to preach than to work you remember the 23rd of next Month I will be seventy Mother has not been well for the last three weeks but is now I think nearly well,

Well I will now tell the boys about my fish and poltry buisness if the rest is tired they need not wait to hear I rented a stable and hen lot with 41 hens & roosters for two dollars per month put in fifteen of our own, and as we keep a day book keep all we buy sell or do I will give you the result we got 2412 eggs sold 552 at the average of 7 cts per doz. set 395 hatched 207 chickens, sold gave away and eat forty nine, have 46 young chicken left. I think rats kill a great many bad weather and crowed for room, the lot was to small they was so far from the house and I had 36 acres of corn to tend, I had the lot six months lacking 8 days, I sold the chickens at 15 cts each so you can count how much the stable cost me for my horses, now for the fish story, I fixed up my trap some time in June, caught the first the 14th of June the last the 17th of July, in all 206, they was mostly cat fish, some sun fish I tried the largest it did not weigh a half poun, many of them would weigh near a half pound, from that down to as mall as you would care to clean, the musk rats got to taking them out, I set a steel trap and caught two of them, I have not set my fish trap lately I shall try it again soon, what fish we could not eat we had no trouble to give away only to take them to the folk, only when we dressed them, that was not often, so you see we had fish and eggs, so boys you see by fishing plowing and feeding chicken I had plenty to do before I leave the boys I will tell them one thing more. I heard my father say if he could have begun the world with the experiance of age he could have done much better, I resolved then to try to begin where he quit, have found great advantage in it, try boys with your father. Most affectionately, J. R. Matthews

N B

I haven't got room to finish my letter so I will have to write again some time our school Land law has been changed for the better we hope to save some of our Land if not all interest is put at 6 per cent & most of the tax taken off and if it is sold we get pay for our improvement so we can only lose what we have payed about three hundred and fifty dollars we calculate to do the best we can and not fret about the result

Sterling Neb. July 5th 1877. J. R. M.

Dear Children & Grandchildren

After so long a time I again under take to write you a few lines I thought it would answer for Mary to write, it is less trouble for her to write than it is for me but you seem to want me to write I supose you think you will get more of it that way if not so good Mary has writen this morning I do not know what she has written she dont like to have her letters read at home, but mine is most allways read before they are sent, I have got in the habit of writing on these big sheets and I like to write on them better than small ones, then I dont like send blank paper so I have to fill them up. that takes a good while to write and considerable time to read, perhaps you think by this time if I am going to write I should get at it, well thats the way if you are going to do any thing go at it and do it

I wrote to you before that we got home well that was true, and it was equaly true that I was glad of it, I thought I was well when I got back to Neb. but if I was, I was a heap weller after I stayed here a while, I can now lay in bed as comfortable as any body, and eat as long as I wish if I can get a nough to eat, and I might as well say now while I think of it, that we live well have plenty, and that thats good and Mother & Mary now how to cook it, and I to eat it. I guess I will not read this letter to Mother & Mary or I shall have to through it away and write an other,

I got a card from Alex W. Hargan your cousin son of Lewis, he is at Sheridan about 30 miles from here, I wrote to him to day I have not seen him for 35 years

I hope you write often

You must mark the envelope especialy on the first they will be too big

I feel a good deal disapointed in my visit I got to see so few of my friends, and appeared to them I did see, to such poor advantage. I feel more anxiety to go there than I did before I went, but it is not likely I ever shall. I did not get right well untill I had an atact of the plurasy and Dr Shipman took me through a cause of medicine. since then I have been remarcable well. I have slept better this summer than for many years but one thing has helped me I have not preached this summer. I have done more work this season than I supposed I could. I plowed and planted thirty six acres of corn and went from town to the far side of my farm to work then kep my team over one fourth of a mile from my house, and it rained and rained then rained again, and dident stay quit untill near the mid=le of June. I got most of my corn planted by the 1st of June we have had but little rain since corn has suffered for rain. it rained a few day ago & things are dooing better. small grain is good but there has not been as much sowed as usual. corn is reasonable good on rooling land, bottoms are bad. I got my renter to let me have part of my place back. if frost is not to soon I shall have considerable corn. my renter will rais but little I gave him what he raised to give us possession the first of Aug, so we have got home again and expect stay there while we hold a claim on it, we have five acres of rye stacked will have one third of ten acres of wheat, our garden stuff is reasonable good the country seems to prosperaing a good many new houses going up especialy in town, there is more improvements this season than any the year before.

Albert & Wm McCartney are building they build a prity good house. Albert paid fifty dollars for the lot and has the deed and knows how to keep it. Ella is a good houskeeper and is as steady as a clock. stays at home and tends to her work as well as any woman in town. Emma is a good girl but does not feel the responsibility about the work that Ella does. Albert is industerous and in good credit has to furnish most of the living but Mc. stays at home and tends to things well they appear to get along well, thanks to some boddy else he has a respectable family.

Doctor Shipmans family is well. Charly is lame for life can walk some without crutches but with them he can get along allmost as fast as any boy, the children are all as you would expect nice, smart children, you may guess what I would say of the twins, but I must say something of the Dr. he has reformed more than any man I now remember of. in the last five or six years it is noticed by his neighbours, and that without religeon but not without Religi=ous influence, he is a good Doctor and has a good practice. Samuel Sprague is geting a long as usual I dont know what he is making, he has built an addition to his house. I understand he has bought a Mortgage of five dollars that was on the Grange Elevator he had one hundred dollars in it before own=ed the scales, if this is true he will soon own the whole consern, they lost their child Netta she has not been healthy for several years, has had a sore leg for several months took the hooping cough and died in a few days. while the neighbours would think it was not much loss for a little sickly crippled child to die and go home to rest, but it is as near the Mo=thers heart as any other child Lucinda took it very hard though she said but little. their other children is well & smart.

these sheets are so small I cant get half in I ought to write. I wanted to write something especialy for the girls but I do not know exactly what write but I promis them if you will get on a plenty of good air fit to breath I will come again